

WYFRA	FINANCE RESOURCES COMMITTEE	& 18 July 2008	AGENDA No.
--------------	--	---------------------------	-----------------------

REPORT OF: DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES

PURPOSE OF REPORT: TO INFORM MEMBERS OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE NATIONAL FRAMEWORK 2008-11.

RECOMMENDATION: THAT MEMBERS NOTE THE REPORT

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT DETAILS

EXEMPTION CATEGORY: NONE

CONTACT OFFICER: NOEL RODRIGUEZ (SENIOR CORPORATE RESOURCES MANAGER) – 01274 655714
noel.rodriquex@westyorksfire.gov.uk

**BACKGROUND PAPERS
OPEN TO INSPECTION:** DRAFT FIRE AND RESCUE NATIONAL FRAMEWORK CONSULTATION EXERCISE 17 FEB 2006

1 Background

1.1 The Fire and Rescue National Framework sets out the Governments priorities and objectives for the Fire and Rescue Service. It does this by making clear the following:-

- The Governments expectations for the Fire and Rescue Service.
- What Fire and Rescue Authorities are expected to do: and
- The support the Government will provide in helping them to meet these objectives.

1.2 The framework is a strategic plan, which outlines the outcomes the Government expects to see, delivered by Fire and Rescue Authorities and Regional Management Boards. For the first time the framework has a life span of three years so that it reflects the Governments plans for the whole of their Comprehensive Spending Review period. A review of the framework will be undertaken if needed after two years of the three have elapsed.

1.3 This report highlights the main requirements that the framework will have on the Fire and Rescue Authorities and these are shown in appendix A.

1.4 Full details of the Fire and Rescue Service National Framework 2008-11 are available via the following web link

[www. communities.gov.uk/document/fire/pdf/nationalframework200811.pdf](http://www.communities.gov.uk/document/fire/pdf/nationalframework200811.pdf)

Hard copies of the framework will also be available to members.

1.5 The appendix also links the framework requirements against the Fire Authorities own priorities in order to ensure that progress against the framework can be measured and reported back to members via our improvement plan.

1.6 The framework is divided into four chapters which are as follows: -

- Chapter 1 Prevention, Protection and Response
This chapter covers the core business of the Fire and Rescue Authorities in analysing risk and taking action to meet and mitigate the effects of those risks.
- Chapter 2 Resilience
This chapter covers the delivery of the key resilience programme and the action FRA's need to take to ensure they are fully equipped to meet the demands of the resilience agenda.

- Chapter 3 Diversity and Workforce

This chapter covers the importance of mainstreaming diversity in all levels of the Fire and Rescue Service and workforce, development training and Health and Safety.

- Chapter 4 Governance and Improvement

This Chapter covers institutions in place to support the delivery of Fire and Rescue Authority business, the new Local Government White Paper framework including Local Area Agreements, Performance Assessment and Finance.

1.7 It is also important that members note that the framework is covered fully by legislation under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 which provides the statutory authority for the National Framework and requires: -

- The Secretary of States to prepare a National Framework for the Fire and Rescue Service
- The Secretary of State must consult with representatives of the Fire and Rescue and their employees before making any significant changes to the Framework.
- The Secretary of State must bring the framework and any significant revision to it into effect by statutory instrument subject to annulment in either of the House of Parliament.
- Fire and Rescue Authorities must have regard to the Framework in exercising their functions.

1.8 In addition, the Acts gives the secretary of State the power to intervene if he/she considers a Fire and Rescue Authority is failing, or likely to fail to act in accordance with the framework. While Fire and Rescue Authorities are expected to make progress in all areas set out in the framework, reference to what Authorities “must” or “should” do indicates those areas that the Minister considers to be most important with “must” being stronger and more specific. Any use of the intervention powers attached to the National Framework will be in accordance with the Local Government Intervention Protocol prepared by the Secretary of State in accordance with section 23 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004. It is envisaged that Government powers would only be used as a last resort.

2 Financial Implications

2.1 Whilst the alignment of the framework with the Authority’s priorities shows that the Authority is already working to deliver most of the aims within the framework there is little doubt that some of them will result in additional resources being required. As these are identified they will be the subject of reports to the Authority including detailed financial implications.

3 Equality and Fairness Issues

- 3.1 The Fire and Rescue Framework Document supports the mainstreaming of equality and diversity.

4 Recommendations

That Members note the report.